Choice Fiction.

HER PHOTOGRAPH.

I know the photographer pinned
A little white card on the screen,
When he'd wrapped up his head in a cloth
And focused his picture-machine;
And as he turned back to the chair,
I am equally certain that he
Said: "Won't you look right at this card?"
Yet she seems to be looking at me.

And after arranging her chin,
And twisting and turning her head,
And adjusting the folds of her dress,
I am sure the photographer said:
"Now please for a moment sit still
And smile 'till you hear me count three,"
As he whisked off the camera's cap;
Yet she seems to be smiling on me.

I presume that she thought it a bore,
And that she was quite ill at ease;
Saw little black specks in her eyes,
And felt a temptation to sneeze;
That she wondered how long it would take,
And what sort of a picture 'twould be;
And yet, when I look at the face,
She seems to be thinking of me.

And when the brief seconds were passed,
And the artist had said: "That is all;"
I presume, as she rose from the chair,
She only said: "When shall I call?"
But the message that waits on these lips,
That smiling, half-parted, I see,
Is as sweet and as fair as her face;
And it seems to be waiting for me.

—*Walter Larned, in Life.*

MADE OR MARRED.

BY JESSIE FOTHERGILL,
Author of "One of Three," "Probation," "The Wellfields," Etc.

CHAPTER II.—CONTINUED.

It must be owned, with every necessary apology for the fact, that Philip Massey had up to that time only appeared as a very commonplace character. During his ten years' management of his own affairs, he had done nothing in the very least remarkable. He had not gone to the bad, nor had he become in any way decidedly good. He had managed to keep out of debt, save little incidental debts now and then, which had never seriously embarrassed him. His amusements had been of the kind common to most of the young men he knew. They all made a point of paying frequent visits to the different Irkford theaters, and passing their valuable criticisms on the various plays and pantomimes performed there; they also patronized different sorts of concerts and entertainments, being directed in their choice by the bent of their minds and surroundings. On Saturday afternoons, when they came home early from business, they were usually in the habit of playing foot-ball in winter, and cricket in summer. They were out in large bodies to play against rival clubs; they adorned their persons for these sports in striped jerseys of startling hue; and they adorned their clubs with names as far-fetched and bizarre as the colors of the costumes in which their souls delighted. Their legs they were wont to encase in stockings still more remarkable than the jerseys; and thus equipped, strong in numbers, they might be seen by proud parents and a delighted public parading the streets to and from their respective cricket or foot-ball grounds.

It sounds a commonplace, every-day kind of career, almost vulgar in its commonplaceness; but it becomes less uninteresting when one thinks of the possibilities hidden behind all those young faces—the possibilities contained in all those young lives—potentialities which might remain dormant to the very last—or in whose full strength might be called forth, and their full results displayed. "Life is not an idle ore," we are told,

"But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And dipped in baths of hissing tears,
And battered with the strokes of doom
To shape and use."

But it may take a less tremendous process than this to mold a young man's character, and prove whether good or bad predominates in him, whether the afflictions or prosperities which attend him in his life's course shall have made or marred him in the end.

It was at one of the afore-mentioned cricket or foot-ball clubs with the mystic titles "Scorpions," "Gnats," "Free Wanderers," or the like, that three or four years ago, Philip Massey had met Hermann Berghaus. German by name, and born of German parents, Hermann had never been in his fatherland. His father was a merchant of Irkford, one of the wealthier merchants; his wife was a charming woman, and their house, always hospitably open to "Hermann's friends," was a pleasant one to go to. The youth himself was the only son of the house, and was blessed with three sisters who were inclined to spoil him. Without any very deep or devoted friendship, Philip and young Berghaus had always been cordial allies, for Hermann, younger by several years than his friend, felt the influence which Philip Massey, despite his commonplace antecedents and career, very generally exercised over his acquaintance; it would have been difficult to say in what the attraction consisted, for his manner was simple and without any particular suavity or polish; perhaps the rather grave simplicity had something to do with the charm, simplicity being rarer now than it once was. He passed among his friends for a very good fellow, difficult to stir up, but occasionally saying dry, humorous things with an undisturbed gravity which made one involuntarily laugh, and again making sharp, sarcastic speeches in a lazy voice, which might be supposed to leave disagreeable sensations in the bosoms of those against whom they were directed. Perhaps also part of the charm may have lain in his appearance, for he was distinctly handsome, with a dark face, and a warm southern coloring, showing that the blood coursed freely under the brown skin, and reminding one occasionally, in a fleeting manner, of some face looking from canvases of Vandyke or Paolo Verenese. He had a pleasant voice, with a tinge of Yorkshire in its accent; pleasant eyes, dark, and containing sometimes a certain glow which hinted at a temper more ardent than his was usually supposed to be. He could frown sometimes, darkly enough, and his smile was a sweet, if not a frequent, one.

He and Hermann Berghaus found themselves presently in a wide, busy suburban street, known as Carlton Road, one of the busiest thoroughfares to and from Irkford. They walked for some little distance up this road, until they had passed the last shops, and had come to a stretch of thoroughfare shaded on either side by large trees, a very pleasant portion of the road. The trees grew behind rather high walls, and behind them were some large, pleasant modern houses, and a few older ones, dating back to the middle of the last century, when Irkford had been a little country town, with fewer inhabitants than were now contained in a single one of its suburbs.

Philip and Hermann turned in at the large wooden gates belonging to one of these houses, and found themselves in a garden, green, fresh and delightful, a garden whose beauty was surprising, as being so near a great smoky town. When the high wooden gates were closed, nothing could be seen of the throng outside, only the tramp, tramp of many feet heard, and the never-ending rumble of vehicles.

"Heyday!" remarked Hermann, looking round the garden, "I don't see any of the girls; they certainly said they were going to play croquet. Let's go and see where they are."

They went into the house, the door of which stood open, into a large, comfortable square hall, and aside into the drawing-room, where was assembled a party of both ladies and gentlemen, who seemed to Philip numerous.

"Hollo, you girls!" cried Hermann; "Thekla, Emilie! I thought you were going to play croquet to-night."

"So many people came, and we thought it so much pleasanter to talk, that we gave it up, Hermann," replied a very clear, decided voice, as a bright looking, yellow-haired girl advanced toward them from the midst of a very talkative group. "Did you bring Mr. Massey here under promise that he should have croquet?" she added, as she shook hands with Philip.

"Well, we came here because we had nowhere else to go," he replied, with brotherly *insouciance*.

"Thank you both for such a flattering visit," said she.

"He perverts the facts, Miss Berghaus. He brought us here because he had been ——"

"Now drop that," said Hermann, good naturedly; "remember it was on your premises that it happened."

"What is this mystery?" asked Thekla.

"And I have a favor to ask of you," continued Philip, "which I hope you will be good-natured enough to grant. But there is no hurry about it. Any time this evening."

"I shall be glad to grant it if I can," she answered, "and meantime listen to me. We are going to have a game. It is called 'clumps,' and I want you to join, will you? It is so amusing."

"As soon as I have spoken to Mrs. Berghaus," said Philip, bowing, and going across the room toward a sofa on which was enthroned the lady of the house, a handsome, open-faced matron, richly dressed and knitting away very rapidly at some bright scarlet wool. A few moments were occupied in paying his respects to her, and then Philip returned to where Thekla Berghaus still stood talking to Hermann.

"I am now at your service, Miss Berghaus; what is the game?"

"Oh, really! How am I to explain? Two people go out of the room, you know, and think of a word."

"So many games seem to me to begin in that way," said Philip, politely.

"I know they do. It doesn't sound original, but it is most amusing. We want a word now. Suppose you and I go out now, and think of one. That will be the quickest way of learning."

"And the pleasantest," said Philip, politely, as he followed her out into the hall.

"Now for a word!" said Thekla. "Let it be something very hard to guess."

"But may I ask what becomes of this unfortunate word, after it has been picked out in such an invidious manner?"

"They have to guess it, you know. You go to one 'clump' of people and I go to the other; and they ask you all sorts of questions, and the answers you give are to be as brief as possible; and so they have to try to find it out, don't you see?"

"With all my heart, so far as the brevity is concerned. But what about the word?"

"A word, or an idea. Let it be something uncommon," said Thekla, eagerly.

"Courtesy, or bashfulness?" suggested Philip.

"Fy, Mr. Massey! How malicious! Something abstract, I mean."

"The music of the future, which I so often hear at your house."

"Ah, that might do. Just now we had women's suffrage."

"Why not success?" suggested Philip again.

"Success?" repeated Thekla, and paused. "Success! the very thing. Only what is success? I don't see how they are ever to guess, or we to define it. Oh, what a treasure of inventiveness you are!"

"It is abstract and uncommon; that is why it struck me as being suitable," said Philip, mildly, as they went back into the drawing-room.

"You are to sit there," said Thekla, pointing out a chair in the midst of a group of persons, "and I go here;" with which she left him.

Philip sat surrounded by a group of almost entire strangers, all eagerly bending forward and questioning him, while he tried to keep in his mind the idea "success," and define it, on the Socratic method, by means of question and answer. An idle play, got up to amuse a set of careless young people. It was characteristic of him that he overlooked the jest, and went to the root of the matter.

"Now, old fellow, is it animal, vegetable, or mineral?" asked Hermann, searchingly.

"None of them."

"Abstract?"

"In itself, not in its results."

"A quality?"

"More like an accident—sometimes inseparable, sometimes not."

"Good or bad?"

"Depends on how it is obtained."

"Oh, it is to be got, then?"

"Yes."

"By working?"

"Sometimes."

"Is it desirable?"

"Most people think so."

"Does it exist?"

"Yes."

"Does it appertain to a man?"

"Yes."

"Woman?"

"Yes."

"Not a quality?"

"I can't conscientiously say that it is a quality."

"Is it everlasting?"

"Far from it."

"What is it like?"

"Not a fair question, but I'll tell you. It has a different appearance to every one who looks at it."

"Would you like it yourself?"

"I should like what I think is it."

"Is it beneficial?"

"Sometimes; sometimes the very reverse."

"What a queer thing! Who dispenses it?"

"The goddess who dispenses everything in the nineteenth century. Her name is Circumstance."

"Nineteenth century? Then it is a modern thing?"

"It is as old as man's ambition," said Philip, incautiously, upon which Emilie, the second Miss Berghaus, pounced upon him with the word:

"*Success!*"

And, on his nodding, hands were loudly and triumphantly clapped.

"You are so very incautious, Massey," said Hermann; "Bless you! I can keep them wandering round a thing for an hour. You would never do to baffle a clever Q. C.

"Perhaps I am not ambitious of *success* in that line. Miss Berghaus," he added, turning to Thekla, "may I speak to you a minute about something?"

"Certainly," said Thekla, quickly. She was always quick, both in speech and gesture, and even more so with Philip Massey than with other people. "Suppose we go into the garden. Would any one else like to go into the garden?"

Several of the party followed the young lady's suggestion, and presently she and Philip were pacing about side by side on the broad walk in front of the drawing-room window.

"The favor I wanted to ask is this," said Philip. "I have a sister at home whom I am very fond of. There was some talk of her coming to Irkford, to go in for the course at the Women's College, but I heard the plan was given up. I did not go home at Whitsuntide, so I only heard from my mother the other day that Grace is really coming after all. Of course she will live with me, which I am very glad of; but you see she does not know Irkford in the least. I don't think she was ever here in her life, and I know no ladies but yourselves, and I am afraid she will find it awfully dull, or I would not have asked. You have always been so very kind, that ——"

"You want us to call upon her, I suppose? I am sure we will do so with pleasure. Emilie and I will call as soon as she comes. When do you expect her?"

"To-day is Friday. I expect her to-morrow, for I think her studies begin on Monday."

"Yes, they do, I know; because my sister Luise goes to the Latin and mathematics course. Well, we will call on Sunday, on our way home from church, and you will bring her to spend Sunday evening with us—yes?"

"Oh, thank you very much! If you are quite sure that Mrs. Berghaus——"

"Mother will be quite agreeable. Come with me, and I will tell her at once," said the active and decided Thekla; and Philip was whirled off to the drawing-room again, and to Mrs. Berghaus, not quite sure how his country-bred sister would look upon such extensive Sunday visiting as was being planned out for her, but glad that Thekla Berghaus displayed so friendly a spirit.

Mrs. Berghaus confirmed all her daughter's promises and invitations; and then, turning to Philip, said: "Mr. Massey, is not the junior partner of your firm going to make a very grand marriage, some time soon?"

"Grey—yes. But I suppose it is more what you would call an 'alliance' than a marriage, isn't it? Lady Elizabeth Preston is her name."

"Yes. She has no fortune; but they say she is very handsome and sensible. Are they going to live near Irkford?"

"I really don't know. All I have heard is that there are going to be great festivities for the work-people, and a ball—for such as myself, and the aristocracy in general, I suppose?"

"Mr. Grey is very nice, isn't he?"

"Nice?" returned Philip, with his unfrequent smile. "I don't think we men are given to speaking of one another as nice. He is very well liked at the office. Talk about success, Miss Berghaus," he added, turning to Thekla, "I call him a signal instance of success, without any particular reason why. He stepped into a splendid fortune on his father's death: he is popular and clever, and is going to contract an alliance with a beautiful member of the aristocracy."

"Is that success?" asked Thekla, pensively.

"Now you ask, I really do not feel sure," said Philip, candidly.

At that moment refreshments were brought in, after which the guests gradually dispersed and Philip, walking home, asked himself again if Mr. Grey's position could be called a successful one. As he passed the gate of No. 59 Lawrence street, he noticed a light behind the green blinds of the ground floor bay-window.

"I wonder what she thought of our behavior this evening?" he speculated. "By Jove! what a couple of fools we must have looked!"

CHAPTER III.
SPECIAL SERVICE.

There was none of the usual adorning for the weekly cricket match required on Philip's part, on Saturday, the day following his visit to the Berghauses.

He had appointed to meet his sister Grace at half past four, and with a thoughtfulness unusal in one of his sex, age and bachelor estate, had ordered dinner to be ready at his lodgings at six, and purposed dining with her. He was therefore not going out of town at all until he returned from the station with his sister.

The great firm in which Philip was employed usually dismissed their employes on Saturday at two o'clock. Philip Massey had seldom been kept beyond his time—he was not important enough for that, he would have said himself, and perhaps with truth. His department had consisted chiefly of home-work, and his employment had been regular, if not exciting. There had been times when he had wished, in the superabundance of his strength and energy, that his mission had been a more active one—times when he had envied the more privileged, more perilous tasks of some others, who were sent abroad to the ends of the earth now and then, on engineering and surveying expeditions, for which, if the discomfort and responsibility were great, yet the remuneration was correspondingly large, and the excitement, thought Philip, must be most remunerative of all. No such fortune had as yet befallen him.

To-day, bearing in mind the fact that he would have two hours and a half to dispose of somehow, before his sister's train was due, Philip was in no haste to depart, but sat, after all the other clerks had gone, at his desk, sorting out papers, and classifying some plans which had long wanted putting in order.

Thus employed, he sat at his desk, and his pen traveled slowly across the paper, while the May sunshine streamed in through the dingy window, and lighted up his dark face. Philip's back was toward a door leading into the office of Mr. Day, the head and confidential clerk, and which, without his knowing it, was standing half open.

By and by voices were heard gradually approaching from a further office, and then steps entered Mr. Day's sanctum. Half abstractedly Philip heard, without exactly listening to what was being said:

"Look here, Grey! Here's a letter just come from—— (murmur, which sank into indistinctness, and then, more loudly.) "What became of those people, Blake—Black—what was the name, who recommended Bywell to us?"

"H'm!" replied the voice of Mr. Grey, the junior partner, to this question of Mr. Starkie, the senior; "wasn't it somewhere out Edgeton way that they went? On my word, I don't remember them. But you know, I think it is only these Chinese fellows grumbling a little. They like to make difficulties, and the British Consul at Y—— must attend to them more or less, for the name of the thing. I don't think there's anything in it."

"I'm not quite so sure that the grumbling is quite without foundation, for my part," replied Mr. Starkie. "I wish very much that you would drive out to Edgeton this afternoon, and make inquiries, quietly. I think it ought to be seen to."

"My dear sir!" came in a tone of dismay from Grey, "I would do a great deal to oblige you, but this is impossible to-day. I promised long ago to go from to-day till Monday to——" The voice dropped again, and then came the words—"entirely for my benefit, you know, and Lady Elizabeth—very sorry, but unless it were a matter of life or death, which it is not, I don't see how I could manage it."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

How They Get Oil.

In boring for oil a wooden derrick of plank and boards is erected. It is usually twenty feet square at the base, sixty to seventy feet high, with the corners so arranged that the top is about three feet square. Here rests a heavy piece which holds the pulley over which the two-inch drilling cable works. In the less elevated localities it is necessary to drive pipe to prevent the caving in of the well and the influx of water. This pipe is of wrought iron, eight inches in diameter, and is driven in seventeen foot sections by a heavy maul erected in the derrick. Since it is to guide the drilling tools, great care is taken to keep it straight. The engine, usually of fifteen horse-power, is placed near the derrick, twelve feet from the center of which is placed the "Samson" post, a heavy piece of timber, twenty inches square and twelve feet high, the top of which is prepared to receive the walking-beam. This beam tapers slightly each way from the center. It is about fifteen inches square, and of such a length that when properly balanced on the "Samson" post one end is over the middle of the derrick floor. To this end is fastened the cable and drilling tools, which weigh some 3,000 pounds, and the other end derives power from the engine, giving the beam a rocking motion, which lifts and drops the tools. They are lowered and drawn by the aid of the "bull" wheel and shaft.

An eight-inch hole is drilled below the veins of fresh water, which are shut off by a wrought iron casing tube, five-and-a-half inches in diameter, lowered in sections eighteen feet long. After the necessary length of casing is introduced, the size of the hole is lessened to five-and-a-half inches, and this size continues down till the well is completed. After oil is struck the tubing pipe, of two or two-and-a-half inches diameter, is let down inside the casing, and a seed bag dropped in between the tube and the casing. The bag is of leather and is filled with flax seed. When it becomes saturated with water it swells and makes a water-tight joint, so that no water can get below it. Four men, two drillers and two blacksmiths, are required to sink a well, and the cost runs 75 cents to $1.50 per foot. The rock, pulverized by the blows of the drill, is removed by use of the sand pump. This is a heavy metal tube, six feet long, which is rapidly lowered with every six feet of progress, the drilling tools being first withdrawn. The sand pump has a valve in the lower part, which closes and retains the contents until the surface is reached.

The process of "torpedoing" a well is resorted to when the well shows signs of giving out. A tin shell filled with a couple of gallons of nitro-glycerine is dropped down and exploded, bursting the rock at the bottom. The effect of this is generally to at once largely increase the yield for the time being.—*Manual of Petroleum.*

—There is nothing so tends to shorten the lives of old people, and to injure their health, as the practice of sitting up late, particularly winter evenings. This is especially the case when there is a grown-up daughter in the family. We publish the item at the earnest request of several young men.—*Chicago Tribune.*